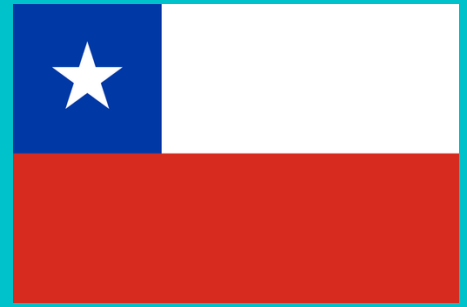




TOUR UPDATE



The Newsletter of mikesworldtour

Tour Highlight:

March 2023
Santiago, Chile



Hiking and History

Contributed by Michael Davis



A QUICK HISTORICAL, POLITICAL, & SOCIAL OVERVIEW

Chile became independent from Spain in 1818, but the elite groups took over the country to run it once the Spanish left. There was an internal split between the military and the oligarchy from 1823-30, and following this was a conservative leadership until 1860. Chile began to prosper economically during this time and from 1860-90 the liberal factions was in power in the country. Balance of payment problems led Chile to go to war with Bolivia and Peru from 1879-83 over salt mines Chile had annexed. Between 1890 to 1920 the country developed politically and a middle class began to grow. After World War 1 there was a lot of uncertainty politically followed by radical presidents. The socialist experiment in the country began under President Allende who was elected in 1970. Allende was overthrown in a coup in 1973 influenced by the US which brought Augusto Pinochet to power as dictator where human rights violations occurred under his rule. His dictatorship lasted until 1990 with new elections. Socialist rule and regular elections returned to Chile in the 21st century. The EIU lists Chile as a flawed democracy.

Santiago, Chile



Some quick tips for Santiago :

- Hold onto your phone! Phone theft is a big deal in Santiago and people will snag your phone while your walking/eating outside
- Everything in the downtown area is fairly walkable but the metro is useful as well as Uber

FOOD

TIJUANA TACOS



We found this place on TikTok, and knew that we just had to try it. It absolutely lived up to the hype and we ended up going here for lunch 2 days in a row. It is very reasonably priced and the tacos and quesatacos were so delicious. It can be hard to find since it is in a small store on a busy street nestled between clothing shops, but if you find it, you are going to eat at an absolute gem!



PISCO SOURS



A drink that is technically native to Peru, but very common to find in Santiago and Chile. This is the traditional Pisco Sour, but at restaurants and bars you can find so many variations. This includes fruit infusions and adding fresh flavors. The favorite one I had was called Salute La Bandera which had blueberry and raspberry. You have to try this drink at least once while your here!



SOHO THAI



We stumbled upon this place for lunch, but it was so so good. They have this huge outdoor patio that was absolute vibes and the food was so good. We shared spring rolls, and I had a pad thai like dish that had chicken. The best part was the mint lemonade I had which was so refreshing in the heat of Santiago that day. If you are looking for a good lunch place with vibey outdoor seating, this place is a vibe.



Santiago, Chile

EXPERIENCES

From historical presidential palaces to hiking lookout views to renowned museums there is a lot to keep yourself entertained in Santiago. As a history buff, it was super exciting to see famous buildings and locations that I have read about. Also seeing the entire city from the top of a mountain really puts into perspective how big the city truly is.

LA MONEDA PALACE



Construction here began in 1784 and it was opened in 1805. The production of coins took place here from 1814 to 1929 (hence the name la moneda which means coins for my gringos). In 1845 President Bulnes made it the seat of the government and the president. Famously, during the Chilean Coup in 1973 the palace was bombed by the country's air force and current President Allende committed suicide inside. For the rest of the 70's the palace was restored, but some bullet marks were preserved for history. General Pinochet built a bunker to escape in case he was attacked while dictator.

PLAZA DE LA CONSTITUCIÓN



In 1930 the plaza was built outside La Moneda Palace. Besides the presidential building other government offices such as the office of foreign affairs, ministry of justice, and central bank also surround the square. Until the 1970s the square was used as a parking lot, but was destroyed in the coup of Allende. Cristián Undurraga and Ana Devés designed the new square that was built in 1983. Today there is a grass area and statues of old Chilean Presidents lining around the plaza.



PLAZA DE ARMAS

Located at the center of the historic center of Santiago, and was created while the city was being designed by conquistador Pedro de Valdivia in 1541. The city was designed like a chess board, so many important government buildings were intended to surround the main square (some still do today!). In 1825 during the Republican age, they changed the name to Plaza de la Independencia, but eventually everyone began calling it Plaza de Armas again (wow talk about an identity crisis). In 2014 it was remodeled to include more green areas and gardens.



Santiago, Chile

CATEDRAL METROPOLITANA DE SANTIAGO

Construction on the church started in 1753 and ended in 1799. The architect of the church was Italian Gioacchino Toesca, and it is in Baroque style. It is located in the Plaza de Armas, and previous church built before were crushed by earthquakes. It is the center of the Archdiocese of Santiago and is home to the seat of the Archbishop of the city. Although the city is very close to a fault line, the cathedral does not have any modern technology or designs that would protect the building in the event of an earthquake.



CASTILLO HIDALGO & CERRO SANTA LUCIA

Cerro Santa Lucia is a massive park inside the middle of Santiago, and was used as a lookout point in the city. Pedro de Valdivia founded the city at the top of the rock here in 1541. The hill gained more importance towards the end of independence when the Spanish built two castles on the hill (Castillo Hidalgo). The castle's name was given after Miguel Hidalgo who died in the Battle of Chacabuco. After independence the city added parks and green spaces where citizens today can enjoy great views of the city.



SAN CRISTOBAL HILLTOP



Right in the heart of Santiago is an 860 meter hill that takes about an hour-hour and a half to climb and provides striking views of the city. On top is a Virgin Mary statue overlooking the entire city. Expect to see people hiking on its many different paths as well as biking up the steep hill. On top of this hill you really can see how expansive the city is and the mountain views throughout the hike and on top are spectacular. Do not forget to bring water since it is a semi-tiring hike, but they do sell drinks and other food on top of the hill.

Santiago, Chile

MUSEO HISTORICO NACIONAL



Founded in 1911 this museum is located in the Palacio de la Real Audiencia de Santiago. Admission to the museum is free and they have various exhibitors in the old hallways and halls of the palace which are incorporated into the museum. The museum is full of collections that discuss daily life in Chile throughout history as well as the role of various groups within Chilean society.

MUSEO CHILENO DE ARTE PRECOLOMBIANO



This museum opened in 1981 thanks to the efforts of Sergio Larraín García-Moreno who recognized the importance of preserving Pre-Colombian artifacts in the 1970s. Today this museum is home to various artifacts from all around South America and represents the culture, discovery, and artifacts of the region before colonization. It pays homage to the various ethnic groups that were living in South America before the Europeans came during colonization.



MUSEO DE BELLAS ARTES

Established in 1880 this museum is home to Chilean as well as other South American art pieces. When walking in you are struck by the awe inspiring statues in the main hall that is full of light coming in from the roof. It is the oldest art museum in South America and is located in the Palacio de Fine Arts (the building truly is beautiful). There were a lot of really cool exhibits here including art that changed depending on your perspective (where you stand while looking at the piece) in the basement of the building.



See You On the Next Stop on the Tour!